



DHS Today via E-mail

March 15, 2001

DHS employees who came to work last year when they would've liked to have stayed home sick will have those extra sick leave hours if they need them. But they won't get any extra money for not using them.

Act 1127 of 1999 set up a method of rewarding retiring state employees who have used their sick leave conservatively throughout their careers. A portion of the law also provided an additional one time lump sum sick leave bonus of \$20 per day for each day of unused sick leave that accrued during 2000, subject to conditions. The conditions were that the average sick leave usage by all state employees for 2000 had to decrease at a least 15 percent compared to the average sick leave usage by state employees for 1998. If sick leave usage declined by at least 12 percent, Governor Huckabee had the option to authorize the bonus.



According to the Department of Finance and Administration, which calculated the numbers for the program, overall sick leave usage by all state employees in 2000 declined by 7.5 percent compared to 1998. In 1998, average sick leave usage per employee was 77.49 hours. For 2000, average sick leave usage per state employee was 71.64 hours. At DHS, sick leave usage for that comparable period declined by about 5.4 percent.

Holding on to those sick leave hours is a smart idea because you never know when you'll need them. But just in case that and the possibility of a bonus check at retirement aren't enough incentive to save them, there's another reason. DHS employees must have had at least 80 hours of combined sick and annual leave at the start of a serious illness to be considered for the department's catastrophic leave program. That program can provide up to six months of paid leave when an employee exhausts all sick and annal leave hours due to a serious illnees.

To figure compensation for unused sick leave hours at retirement, see DHS policy 1092, Sick Leave Incentive Program.

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The Division of Youth Services' outstanding employee at AYSC for March is **Annette Joslin**. She is a Secretary II in the Central Records Unit. She has worked for DYS for three years. Annette's supervisor, **Jacobia Twiggs**, says "she is positive and upbeat and always works with a smile." Annette was the only primary clerical personnel for Placement and Juvenile Services for the past year and she is responsible for generating RS-9's, completing Initial Services Plans, answering the telephones, taking messages, and providing information to Central Office Staff as requested. Twiggs also adds, "Annette is always willing to learn and be available for any task and stay to the task until finished." When Annette is not helping place juveniles, she enjoys spending time with her two children, **Miranda** and **Brook**. She also enjoys shopping, going to the gym and outdoor activities such as walking.

Al Garrett is a long time employee with state government and the central office outstanding employee for March. Al is currently the Policy Development Manager in the Audits and Compliance section of Central Office. He has been with DYS for two years and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the division. Al has been involved in the development of many projects for the betterment of the division and the juveniles in its custody. **Eva Moon**, a co-worker, said, "Al knows that hard work is the means by which any task can be accomplished and he is never afraid to put full effort into anything he works on." He is talented on many levels and has a knack for writing. Al is well versed in the procedures of state government and financial processes. Al is an avid boater and gardener. He is also a talented artist, which allows him to tackle many projects that most people could not accomplish. Al's work ethic makes him a shining example to all who come in contact with him.



Duane Dutka, DHS County Administrator in Clay County, recently served as Chaplain to the Arkansas House of Representatives and the Arkansas Senate. As Chaplain, Duane opened the House session with prayer on February 20th and the Senate session on February 21st. In his capacity as Chaplain, Duane has met with most of the legislators individually as well as other state officials. Duane is minister of the Paragould Christian Church. He has been House Chaplain since 1995 and Senate Chaplain since 1999.

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March is National Social Workers' Month. Social workers at DHS strive hard to provide the highest quality service to their clients. They also work to help their peers increase their level of knowledge and improve their abilities.

Thanks to all those caseworkers, family service workers, and individuals that choose to work with families, children, and individuals that need our help.



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. The month-long recognition began in 1983 when it was first declared by a presidential proclamation. Each local DCFS county office staff is working to prepare some special activities to raise public awareness of child abuse and help prevent it. This year's theme is "Nurture Your Kids. They Don't Grow on Trees." A representative from each county will be receiving brochures, pencils, posters, bookmarks, bumper stickers, and other materials to be used in their April activities and presentations. **Cindy Taylor**, in the Community Support section of DCFS, is coordinating distribution of these materials. The Miller County DCFS is sponsoring one recognition event. The second annual Child Abuse Prevention March will be held on April 6, 2001 at 10 a.m. It begins at the Bi-State Justice Center and concludes at the Stateline Post Office. For more information, contact **Aquonette White** at (870) 773-0563.

Chris Booker of Clarendon, AR, son of Monroe County DHS Administrator **Kay Booker** and her husband, **Mike**, is a member of the Delta State University national championship football team. The Statesmen defeated the Bloomsburg, PA Huskies 63-34 to capture their first ever-national football title. The Statesmen finished the season with a 14-1 overall record, 8-1 in the Gulf South Conference and their second GSC title in three years. Several Statesmen were honored for their outstanding play this season. Chris, a sophomore on the field, plays offensive left guard for the Statesmen. This year he earned First Team All Gulf South Conference, First Team All South Region, First Team Daktronics All-American, Second Team All-American in Don Hansen's National Football Gazette, and Third Team AP Little All American.



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Several months ago, we included an item in the newsletter about DHS employee Conn Hutzell's young niece who faced some pretty serious surgery. Conn asked if employees would send her cards and some encouraging words to face her medical problems. We've received a couple inquiries about how that surgery went and decided to follow it up. Conn says that he was amazed at the response his request received and thanks everyone for the concern for his family. His sister, Dawn, who is Brooke's mom, sent along the following note:

First, I want to thank everyone for all the thoughts, mail and prayers you sent to Brooke. She couldn't have done it without you all! Brooke is doing beautifully. She started back to school full time after Christmas break. She's been back to the hospital once since then and they said that she's doing great. She's wearing a back brace for about a year. She has to wear it 23 out of 24 hours but takes that in stride like she has everything else. It comes up under her chin and the middle of the back of her head so it really gives her a lot of support. They want to make sure that her spine heals well before she's without support. She doesn't have to use her wheelchair in her room at school, only if she has to be out walking in the halls. She's glad to be back with all her friends. Her balance will always be a problem because of the nerve disease but she picked out a lab mix from the animal shelter and we're going to try to train her to help Brooke. I think they'll do beautifully together. All the cards, wishes and prayers really meant so much to both of us. We couldn't have done it without you all! Thank you so much and we'll keep you posted.

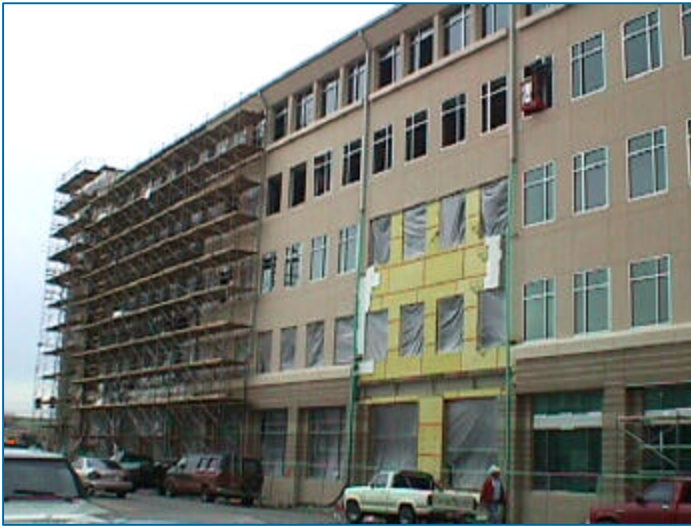
Gwendolyn C. Williams, Area Director, Division of County Operations, wants to thank the many DHS staff from all over the state who lifted her family up when they were faced with the sudden death of her husband, Leslie (Les) Williams, on January 29, 2001. The compassion of the entire department not just the Division of County Operations knocked at the door of the family's heart. Gwen wrote: "Your kindness was born among you and that is why so many of you are in the human services "caring for people" business. I love each of you for the comfort you provided my family in our weakest hours. A lot of the DHS family traveled some distance to attend the funeral services and be with the family in Forrest City, AR. You did not hide yourself when we needed you most and we thank you. You wept with us and carried us when



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we could not carry ourselves. You sacrificed so much to ease our pain by sending floral tributes; financial contributions to the family and memorial funds, keepsakes; food; incidentals and cards. Your calls, visitations, and many acts of kindness let us know how much you care.

I have returned to work and thank each of you for your continuous support, patience and understanding. On the wings of prayer my two sons, (Jason & Justen) and I will continue to grow in strength. Just as you have been a blessing to my family, may each of you be showered with blessings beyond compare.”



Work continues on the new Donaghey Building in downtown Little Rock. As workers complete the façade on the south end of the

building, construction crews work on the north end of the building attaching the new crosswalk to the Donaghey West Building.

Do you have something you'd like to share in the newsletter? Send an email to Joyce.Williams@mail.state.ar.us. You can also fax items to (501) 682-6512 or call (501) 682-6580.

